

Fire Zone Compatible Plants

Oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*) are an example of a fire zone compatible plant. Oaks have bulky, water-laden trunks which are difficult to ignite.



Oak Tree

Photo: B. Burkhardt

Some native shrubs and small trees that are fire zone compatible include: toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), holly-leaved cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*), lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*), and coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*).

Photo: D. Clark



Toyon

Photo: D. Clark



Lemonade Berry

Photo: B. Burkhardt



Dwarf Chaparral Broom

Photo: D. Clark



California Fuchsia

Photo: B. Burkhardt



Holly Leaved Cherry

Photo: D. Clark



Coffee Berry

Photo: D. Clark



Lilac Verbena

Photo: B. Burkhardt



Yucca

Certain native groundcovers can reduce fire hazards and provide erosion control. Dwarf chaparral broom (*Baccharis pilularis* variety) has deep roots for erosion control and with watering twice a month, will retain ample moisture to guard against fire.

California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*) is also a fire retardant plant which has scarlet flowers and attracts hummingbirds.

Native verbena (*Verbena lilacina*) will help guard against fire and erosion. Verbena has blue flowers and is aromatic.

Native cacti and yucca are also effective fire retardant plants, yet should be planted only in areas where there is no pedestrian traffic. Cacti spines can be dangerous and cause injuries.

Note: Even compatible species may need thinning.

Fire Prone Native Plants

Chamise or greasewood (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) is a highly flammable native plant. Chamise supports dry, twiggy growth which can catch fire easily. Like eucalyptus, chamise has oils which can explode when exposed to intense heat. Removing chamise and other fire prone plants completely is not necessary. Complete removal could lead to erosion problems on slopes. Any fire prone plants that are near structures should be severely pruned to help reduce fire hazards.



Chamise

Need More Information?

For information on endangered and threatened species, contact the local San Diego US Fish and Wildlife Service office at (619) 431-9440.

For information on City of San Diego brush, fire, and fuel management regulations, please call (619) 533-4444.

For native plants information, contact the California Native Plant Society office at (619) 685-7321.

This information is available in alternative formats upon request.

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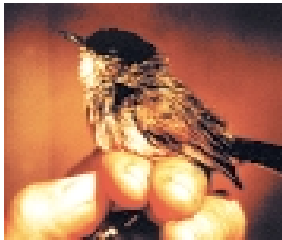
Environmentally Sensitive Brush Management

A guide to safe, effective reduction in fire risks while preserving and enhancing biological resources.

*This is a City of San Diego publication produced by:
Environmental Services
In Cooperation with:
Development Services
Fire and Life Safety Services
Neighborhood Code Compliance*

Why Protect Natural Vegetation?

Our native plant communities, such as wetlands, grasslands, scrub, and chaparral, support a unique and diverse community of plants and animals, which include several endangered and threatened species. When these natural areas occur near residential areas, it presents opportunities for bird and other wildlife viewing that enriches our quality of life.



California Gnatcatcher



Cholla Cactus With Cactus Wren Nest



Southern Maritime Chaparral Habitat

IT IS ILLEGAL TO DISTURB PROTECTED NATURAL RESOURCES

State, federal, and local laws protect many of the plants and animals that inhabit the natural areas of San Diego. It is important to implement brush management correctly so that these laws are not violated. Fines can be severe. Contact the US Fish and Wildlife Service at (619) 431-9440 for more information.

Brush management on your property may require permits. If brush management is needed on City-owned open space additional approvals may be necessary. Please call Park and Recreation, Open Space Division at (619) 685-1351 for information.

How Do We Balance the Need to Protect Biological Resources with Safety?

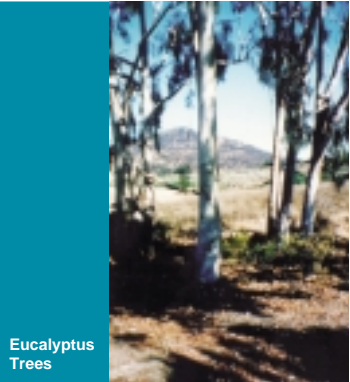
SAFETY FIRST.

The quantity of vegetation can be reduced without significantly damaging natural resources. To find out how much you are permitted to remove, refer to the City's Landscape Technical Manual and the materials provided by Fire and Life Safety Services. Choice of species can also reduce fire hazards. This brochure describes the species that can be used to reduce fire hazards while promoting native habitat values.

Non-Native Problem Plants

Some plants catch fire readily and can spread fires quickly. Some of the worst species are eucalyptus, pine trees and *Arundo donax*, also known as Giant Bamboo or Giant Cane. These non-native plants provide limited habitat value for native wildlife. Although eucalyptus is a popular tree in San Diego, it can be dangerous in a fire. Oils contained in the eucalyptus and pine trees are highly flammable. It is best to not plant eucalyptus or pines near structures that are adjacent to fire hazard areas.

When removing eucalyptus, to avoid resprouting, an appropriate herbicide should be applied to the stump per recommended use by the manufacturer. Tree debris should be removed to avoid reseeding and/or suppression of native plant germination.



Arundo donax should be cut down and removed from fire zones because it contains dry, dead plant material which can catch fire easily. An herbicide should be applied to the stumps. Multiple applications may be necessary to completely eradicate this plant. This plant can be removed from slopes without a permit but local, state, or federal laws may require a permit before removing any plant from water courses. Call Development Services, Early Assistance Division at (619) 236-6501.



Some iceplant varieties also cause problems on slopes. Although iceplants do not easily catch fire, they do not provide good erosion control and can cause steep slopes to slip in heavy rains. Iceplants are non-native and can be invasive and should not be planted in any areas adjacent to a natural habitat preserve. Invasive plants can spread into preserves, take over native habitats and cause displacement of native plants and animals.



Other types of non-native plants, such as those listed below, should not be introduced into areas which are adjacent to natural habitat preserve.

NON-NATIVE PROBLEM SPECIES

Botanical Name	Common Name
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree-of-Heaven
<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed
<i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i>	Paper Mulberry
<i>Carpobrotus</i> & others	Iceplant
<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	Pampas Grass
<i>Eucalyptus</i> spp.	Eucalyptus
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	Tree Tobacco
<i>Pennisetum setaceum</i>	Fountain Grass
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Castor Bean
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom
<i>Tamarix</i> spp.	Tamarisk